

2. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the loan manager further controls the lending of the license for the unused electronic asset by a lender having another one of the plurality of user accounts.

3. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein:

the account manager further maintains a subset of the plurality of user accounts as members of a one of a plurality of communities;

the asset manager further maintains ownership of the license by one of the communities; and

the loan manager restricts the borrowing of the license for the unused electronic asset to a borrower having a user account membership in the same community having ownership of the license.

4. The apparatus of claim 3, wherein:

the account manager further maintains a subset of the plurality of user accounts as members of a one of a plurality of access control lists;

the asset manager further maintains an association between the access control list and the unused electronic asset; and

the loan manager further restricts the borrowing of the license for the unused electronic asset to a borrower having a user account listed in the access control list associated with the unused electronic asset.

5. The apparatus of claim 4, wherein the access control list restriction is overridden in response to a request by a borrower not having a user account listed in the access control list associated with the unused electronic asset.

6. (Cancelled) The apparatus of claim 1, further comprising:

a notification manager to notify the borrower when the loan manager approves a loan to the borrower of the license for the unused electronic asset.

(A3) 7. (Amended) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the borrower notification is an electronic message addressed to the borrower and containing written instructions for installing for downloading the unused electronic asset.

(A3) 8. (Amended) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the notification is communicated over a communications network.

(A4) 9. The apparatus of claim 8, wherein the communications network is the Internet.

(A4) 10. (Amended) The apparatus of claim 1, further comprising:
an electronic distribution mechanism to automatically install the unused electronic asset on the borrower's computer in response to the loan approval.

(A5) 11. The apparatus of claim 3, wherein a community is one of a plurality of types of intra-organizational entities, including a project team, department, or division.

(A5) 12. (Amended) A computer-readable medium having computer-executable instructions for performing:
managing a plurality of user accounts;
managing at least one license for one of a plurality of unused electronic assets;
controlling the borrowing of the at least one license for the unused electronic asset by a borrower having one of the plurality of user accounts; and
notifying the borrower when a loan to the borrower of the license for the unused electronic asset is approved.

(B3) 13. The computer-readable medium of claim 12, wherein:
managing the plurality of user accounts includes associating each user account with one of a plurality of communities;
managing the license includes associating the license with one of the plurality of communities and assigning the license to one of the plurality of user accounts; and

controlling further includes restricting the borrowing to eligible borrowers, wherein an eligible borrower is associated with the same community as the license.

14. The computer-readable medium of claim 13 having computer-executable instructions for further performing:
displaying the plurality of unused electronic assets; and
reassigning the at least one license to a second one of the plurality of accounts in response to a selection of a one of the plurality of unused electronic assets from the display by a borrower using the second one of the plurality of accounts.

15. The computer-readable medium of claim 14 wherein:
managing the plurality of user accounts includes adding or deleting each user account into at least one of a plurality of access control lists or not;
managing the license includes associating the unused electronic asset with a one of the plurality of access control lists; and
controlling further includes restricting the borrowing to a borrower listed on the access control list to which the electronic asset is assigned.

16. (Amended) A method comprising:
managing a plurality of user accounts;
managing at least one license for one of a plurality of unused electronic assets;
controlling the borrowing of the at least one license for the unused electronic asset by a borrower having a one of the plurality of user accounts; and
notifying the borrower when a loan to the borrower of the license for the unused electronic asset is approved.

17. (Amended) The method of claim 16, wherein:
managing the plurality of user accounts includes associating each user account with a one of a plurality of communities;
managing the license includes associating the license with a one of the plurality of communities and assigning the license to one of the plurality of user accounts; and

controlling further includes restricting the borrowing to eligible borrowers, wherein an eligible borrower is associated with the same community as the licensee.

18. (Amended) The method of claim 17, wherein the one of a plurality of communities is an organizational entity, including a division, department or team.

19. (Amended) The method of claim 16, further comprising displaying the plurality of unused electronic assets.

20. (Amended) The method of claim 19, further comprising reassigning the at least one license to a second one of the plurality of accounts in response to a selection of a one of the plurality of unused electronic assets from the display by a borrower using the second one of the plurality of accounts.

21. (Amended) The method of claim 16, wherein:

managing the plurality of user accounts includes adding or deleting each user account into at least one of a plurality of access control lists or not;

managing the license includes associating the unused electronic asset with a one of the plurality of access control lists; and

controlling further includes restricting the borrowing to a borrower listed on the access control list to which the electronic asset is assigned.

22. (Amended) A computer implemented method comprising:

generating a license and associated license restrictions for an unused electronic asset on a lending library server;

displaying to a borrower the license and associated license restrictions on a lending library client, wherein the lending library client is separate from the lending library server;

receiving a borrower selection for the license and transferring the license to the borrower if eligible in accordance with the associated license restrictions; and

transmitting to the borrower instructions for the installation of the unused electronic asset in compliance with the transferred license on the lending library client.

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23. The method of claim 22, wherein the lending library server and the lending library client are connected to a communications network.

24. The method of claim 22, wherein the associated license restrictions require the borrower to belong to a community, the community being the same community to which the unused electronic asset belongs.

25. The method of claim 24, wherein the associated license restrictions further require the borrower to be listed on an access control list associated with the unused electronic asset.

26. The method of claim 24, wherein the community is an organizational entity, including a division, department or team.

27. (Amended) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the electronic asset lending library database resides on a removable data storage device.

28. (Amended) The apparatus of claim 27, wherein the data storage device is a CD-ROM or a DVD-ROM.
